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Chairman: Mr. MONGBE (Benin)

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ORGANIZATION OF WORK

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 95: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (continued) (A/C.2/48/L.10)

(a) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMITMENTS AND POLICIES AGREED UPON IN THE DECLARATION ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION, IN PARTICULAR THE REVITALIZATION OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (continued)

(b) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR THE FOURTH UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT DECADE (continued)

Draft resolution on implementation of the commitments and policies agreed upon in the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the revitalization of economic growth and development of the developing countries (A/C.2/48/L.10)

1. Mr. JARAMILLO (Colombia) introduced the draft resolution (A/C.2/48/L.10) on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and said he hoped it would be adopted by consensus.

AGENDA ITEM 96: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT (continued) (A/C.2/48/L.11)

Draft resolution on the International Conference on Population and Development (A/C.2/48/L.11)

2. Mr. JARAMILLO (Colombia) introduced the draft resolution (A/C.2/48/L.11) on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, emphasizing the importance of paragraph 5 in particular, and expressed the hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

AGENDA ITEM 154: UNITED NATIONS INTERIM OFFICES (A/48/146 and Add.1)

3. Mr. DESAI (Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development), referring to the Secretary-General's report on United Nations interim offices (A/48/146 and Add.1), said that the Secretary-General's current position on the question took into account a wide variety of points of view conveyed to him by Member States. The General Assembly, in resolution 47/199, had emphasized that the operational activities of the United Nations development system carried out in new recipient countries should be undertaken from the outset on the basis of an integrated, unified, cost-effective and innovative approach to development cooperation and presence in the countries concerned. The Assembly had also asked the Secretary-General to strengthen the resident coordinator system so as to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations system at the field level through a fully coordinated multidisciplinary approach under the leadership of the resident coordinator in the interests of recipient countries.

4. In seeking to respond to those mandates, the Secretary-General had conducted two related exercises. One had been the establishment in new

recipient countries of interim offices which would strengthen the integration and cost-effectiveness of United Nations activities in the field. Substantively, his intention had been to respond to the demands of Member States for a better coordinated and multidisciplinary response to the needs of recipient countries. Administratively, it was intended to reduce administrative costs and maximize resources available for programme delivery. It was to be hoped that the specialized agencies would choose to be associated with those offices and the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) had welcomed the decision to work for a more unified field presence.

5. The Secretary-General had also strengthened the system of resident coordinators. Convinced that the heads of the new offices should be able to assist the host Governments by establishing clear focal point arrangements on the United Nations side, he had decided to use the title "United Nations Representative" for them. At the same time, he had proceeded from the assumption that the same person would normally serve as both United Nations Representative and Resident Coordinator and would also be the Resident Representative of UNDP. In appointing the United Nations Representatives the Secretary-General had taken into account the guidelines established by the General Assembly in paragraph 39 of resolution 47/199.

6. Concern had been expressed that the interim offices would perform political functions without the mandate of the General Assembly and to the detriment of the primary development objectives. The Secretary-General wished to state emphatically that none of those concerns had any basis. Although some of the activities of the interim offices involved aspects not falling within the accepted definition of operational activities for development, they took place as a result of clear legislative mandates and in agreement with the countries concerned.

7. Another concern related to the possible use of the interim offices and later all the field offices for human rights monitoring without the authorization of the Assembly. The Secretary-General would point out that when the Assembly asked him to undertake human rights, preventive diplomacy or peace-keeping activities he would consult with the Governments concerned to determine, with their consent, how such mandates could be implemented. He had no intention of entrusting such activities to the interim offices except where specific mandates existed. It was worth noting, however, that the United Nations was being asked increasingly by Governments to provide technical assistance for the democratization process in areas such as electoral support.

8. The Secretary-General was convinced that the experience with the interim offices had been positive and that the countries concerned had benefited from their presence. The main function of those offices had been and would continue to be to respond to the development needs of the countries concerned including, where required, through the provision of coordinated humanitarian assistance.

9. Mr. JARAMILLO (Colombia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and of China, said that those countries would soon, upon conclusion of consultations, be giving their views on the Secretary-General's new positions.

10. Mr. FERNANDEZ DE COSSIO (Cuba) said that it was his impression that the Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development had in his introductory statement presented new views that might render obsolete not only the two reports of the Secretary-General on the matter but also the proposed programme budget in relation to interim offices. He would therefore like clarification from the Secretariat on the question.

11. Mr. ARELLANO (Mexico) supported the representative of Cuba and requested that the Under-Secretary-General's statement be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly.

12. Mr. DESAI (Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development) observed that his statement, which represented the current position of the Secretary-General, dealt solely with the main points at issue.

13. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Under-Secretary-General's statement should be issued in all official languages.

14. It was so decided.

15. Mr. SLEEUWAGEN (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Union, recalled that the notion of integrating the activities of United Nations agencies in the field was not a new one, and met the concern for improving efficiency, increasing integration and maximizing impact. The basic characteristics of operational activities were that they should be neutral, universal, and carried out to benefit the developing countries requesting them, in the context of their policies and priorities. United Nations agencies also had an obligation to be active in humanitarian affairs, and there the interim offices had an important role. Lastly, the interim offices could, when necessary and after consideration by the General Assembly, have an information function.

16. The interim offices that had been established during the past year must be enabled to continue to operate, and it should be possible to open other offices during the current biennium, within the available resources and with the consent of the General Assembly. Afterwards, once their role and operation was assessed as part of the triennial policy review of operational activities, such offices could become integrated offices.

17. The directors of such offices should be appointed on the basis of their knowledge of development issues and of the operational activities of the United Nations. General Assembly resolution 47/199 put forward criteria guaranteeing an appropriate selection, with particular attention given to the quality of the candidates; and in most cases the same person, normally the UNDP resident representative, would perform the functions of resident representative and resident coordinator.

18. Mr. KUDRYAVTSEV (Russian Federation) said that the decision taken by the Secretary-General in 1992 to establish United Nations interim offices in a number of countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and in Georgia had enabled those countries to benefit from a United Nations presence during a difficult period for them, their passage to a market economy.

(Mr. Kudryavtsev, Russian Federation)

19. The establishment and functioning of those offices were set out in detail in the report of the Secretary-General (A/48/146/Add.1), and his delegation supported the ideas and proposals it contained. It was indeed through an integrated, unified approach which also took into account the particular needs of each country that the United Nations system could resolve the whole range of problems arising in countries in transition in the socio-economic, humanitarian and environmental areas.

20. If the importance of bearing in mind the needs of the countries and respecting their national sovereignty was recognized, as the Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development had rightly observed in his introductory statement, that kind of representation, which was provisional and experimental, did not set a precedent and was not likely to be politicized.

21. The work of the interim offices should be reviewed in the light of paragraph 49 of resolution 47/199 relating to operational activities for development within the United Nations system, and the most important principle in that paragraph, in his delegation's view, was the "innovative approach". Bearing in mind the particular needs of each country and applying such an innovative approach, the interim offices, in addition to their traditional functions, would perform activities of a humanitarian nature and disseminate information.

22. The activities of the interim offices were determined in consultation with the Governments of the recipient States and were governed by bilateral agreements, following the spirit and the letter of General Assembly resolution 47/199. It would be very useful to study in detail the organization and work of the interim offices in order to determine ways of improving the effectiveness of the operational activities of the United Nations system in the field, for none would dispute that one of the main objectives in that area was better coordination of the activities of all the agencies working in the field, specifically by strengthening the resident coordinator system.

23. The Russian Federation, which had concluded a special agreement with the Secretary-General of the United Nations on 15 June 1993 concerning the establishment of a United Nations integrated office in its territory, believed that the new model of representation would allow all United Nations bodies, funds, programmes and specialized institutions to expand their assistance to the Russian Federation at a critical moment in its history. In conclusion, his delegation reiterated that in its view such an agreement did not constitute a precedent.

24. Mr. NIE Hualiang (China) thanked the Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development for his introductory statement. As the representative of Colombia had already explained when speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and of China, the new position taken by the Secretary-General as set out in that statement had to be studied in depth before it could be assessed.

25. Mr. SUCHARIPA (Austria) thanked the Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development for his most judicious account and also

(Mr. Sucharipa, Austria)

congratulated the Secretary-General for his report on United Nations interim offices (A/48/146/Add.1).

26. The establishment of interim offices in seven countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States was a perfectly satisfactory response to the request made to the Secretary-General in General Assembly resolution 47/199.

27. It was encouraging to note that the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) had welcomed the Secretary-General's decision to try to unify the presence of the United Nations system in the field. Given the interdependence of the various aspects of sustainable development, the integrated approach should in fact be extended to the administrative level. The United Nations system stood only to gain by a more integrated and more unified conception of its activities.

28. His delegation therefore fully supported the Secretary-General's proposal for further integration of the United Nations presence at the country level, but it took the concerns expressed by a number of delegations very seriously. An interim office could not be set up unless the host country wished it and explicitly requested it. Moreover, it would be more prudent to establish interim offices primarily in countries where there was not yet a United Nations presence and to assign to them, preferably, activities of a humanitarian order or involving dissemination of information on the United Nations system in general.

29. It was a delicate task to balance respect for tradition and a courageous search for innovation, but his delegation was convinced that the Committee would arrive at a consensus on the matter, and it was ready to take part in trying to find that balance.

30. Ms. VOLKOFF (Canada) said that, in the summer of 1993, a Canadian representative had taken part in a UNDP field visit to Uzbekistan which had enabled him to compare the interim office established in that country with United Nations arrangements in other countries.

31. As far as United Nations operational activities for development were concerned, although it was important to look for cost-efficiency and effective results in the field, it should be emphasized that effective ways of operating and cost-efficient ways were not always the same and that different solutions might be required in different countries in order to reach the same objectives.

32. In countries where United Nations operations were relatively limited, the most economical course might be to combine all the elements into one integrated office. However, since one of the main advantages of the United Nations development system was its neutrality, its effectiveness might suffer if the Organization's economic and social role was merged with its political role. Her delegation therefore welcomed Mr. Desai's statement that those offices would not be politicized in any way.

33. Since not all circumstances were alike, there was no universal solution. In many countries, the current system of appointing a resident coordinator to oversee the economic and social activities of the United Nations system was the

(Ms. Volkoff, Canada)

preferred model. It was also essential for the host country to define its own needs clearly.

34. That arrangement was fully in keeping with the spirit of resolution 47/199 on operational activities, which set out the principles which had been agreed upon after lengthy deliberations by Member States.

35. Canada believed that in certain countries the situation called for a case-by-case solution. Nevertheless, as in the case of the former Soviet Union, the Organization should make every effort to implement the principles set forth in General Assembly resolution 47/199 before considering other measures.

36. Mrs. RADUCHOWSKA-BROCHWICZ (Poland) felt that it would be a positive sign for the United Nations system to adopt an integrated approach to development cooperation since it would allow all the multilateral and bilateral bodies to work together, focusing on the needs of individual countries while at the same time addressing regional and subregional concerns.

37. Her delegation agreed that the activities of United Nations offices should comply fully with the provisions of the General Assembly resolutions relating to operational activities for development, and should be carried out in accordance with the development policies and priorities of the countries concerned. Those activities should be voluntary and of a grant nature and should make it possible to respond to the needs of countries in a flexible manner.

38. The three main spheres (operational activities, the dissemination of information and humanitarian assistance) should be closely linked with national capacity-building and the process of democratization. The more efficient management of existing facilities would certainly create the basis for an integrated, unified, cost-effective and innovative approach to meeting the immediate needs of the countries concerned.

39. Interim offices could facilitate access to the United Nations system for those Member States which sought its assistance, especially the newly independent States and those in transition which were faced with unexpected new challenges. To achieve closer cooperation between the United Nations system and recipient countries, the United Nations information centres could be integrated with other United Nations offices such as those of UNDP.

40. It would be helpful if the Secretary-General would submit a comprehensive report to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session on the activities of all the existing interim offices, as well as those that were to be established (in the Russian Federation and Eritrea).

41. Since the operation was rather experimental and there was no provision for the offices in the regular budget, they had been called "interim offices", and the future would show whether they could be converted into "United Nations integrated offices". Her delegation was ready to support efforts by the Organization to elaborate that formula and hoped that it would help to improve the efficiency of the United Nations system.

42. Mr. GOUMENNY (Ukraine) said that Ukraine, which was one of the seven countries where a United Nations interim office had been established, had not foreseen, when concluding the agreement on the establishment of that office, how politicized the question would become. It was to be hoped that the Second Committee would act in conformity with the spirit of the Organization's main principles and would not allow the interests of the recipient countries to be jeopardized.

43. His delegation had studied the report of the Secretary-General (A/48/146/Add.1) with care. It regarded his decision to establish seven United Nations interim offices as a positive step and agreed with his idea of organizing their activities on the basis of "an integrated, unified, cost-effective and innovative approach to development cooperation". It could be said that the utilization of a new model for the expansion of technical assistance programmes in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States constituted the first stage in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 47/199 and was an example of the Secretary-General's efforts to adapt the activities of the Organization's economic and social sectors to the current demands. The unified approach adopted by the interim offices was necessitated by the unprecedented problems facing the countries in transition. As the Secretary-General had noted, in establishing the United Nations interim offices, it had not been his intention to disturb or replace existing mechanisms for coordination, but rather to provide a more comprehensive and unified United Nations presence in the countries concerned.

44. The functions of the United Nations interim office established in Kiev were clearly defined in an agreement concluded between the Government of Ukraine and the United Nations, whereby the office would cooperate with the national authorities in the implementation of assistance programmes relating to socio-economic development, including the training of personnel. It would coordinate the activities of UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNEP and other United Nations bodies. In other words, the functions of the United Nations interim office in Ukraine would not exceed the framework of operational activities. As an illustration, he said that the first "umbrella project" of UNDP technical assistance to Ukraine had been carried out with the direct support of the interim office. That project should facilitate the administration and coordination of technical assistance programmes at the national level through the utilization of the development cooperation analysis system database and the services of UNDP experts and consultants.

45. The interim office had taken the necessary steps to organize consultative support for the elaboration of programmes relating to personnel training, the reform of the financial sector, privatization and the establishment of mechanisms to attract foreign investors. It was important that the interim office in Kiev was striving to develop programmes of cooperation by mobilizing extrabudgetary resources and had established contacts with the missions of the international financial institutions. In that connection, a "microfund" for new small enterprises might be established, partly financed by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). Ukraine, for its part, was ready to play an active role in the execution of UNDP projects in the developing countries.

46. His delegation supported the present concept of an interim office as set out in paragraph 15 of the Secretary-General's report (A/48/146/Add.1). A more

(Mr. Goumenny, Ukraine)

unified United Nations presence at the country level was very important; it was therefore quite appropriate to entrust responsibility for humanitarian activities to the interim offices. Moreover, the conversion of those interim offices into United Nations integrated offices would be a very positive step, provided that, as some delegations had said, they were not given purely political tasks to carry out. Relations between the United Nations and its Member States should be strictly regulated on the basis of bilateral agreements, and the offices should serve only the countries in which they were located. No pressure should be brought to bear in that area.

47. Although the legal bases for the development of an integrated approach to a United Nations presence at the country level had already been established in General Assembly resolutions 47/199 and 46/182, it was clear that, in the circumstances, the clear mandate of the General Assembly was needed to preserve the United Nations interim offices in the countries in transition. His delegation, which had already made its contribution to the decision-making process, was ready to continue a constructive dialogue on that issue.

48. Mr. NOVRUZOV (Azerbaijan) said that his country attached the greatest importance to the item under consideration and welcomed the activities undertaken both in the political arena and in development matters through the United Nations interim office in Azerbaijan. The establishment of that office, while Azerbaijan was passing through an extremely difficult period, had been completely justified. Unfortunately, the country was the victim of armed aggression, which had led to the occupation of more than 20 per cent of the territory of Azerbaijan and produced more than a million refugees and displaced persons. The question had been considered on several occasions by the Security Council, which had on almost every occasion requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the situation. Since the information requested had been essentially political and military, the head of the United Nations interim office had had to travel in the field, his latest visit having been to the Zangelan district, where he had seen the destruction of scores of communities and a formerly thriving district with a population of about 60,000 put to fire and sword. It was not hard to imagine the efforts and financial resources which would have been required for the dispatch of a fact-finding mission if no interim office had existed in Baku.

49. The other important function performed by the United Nations interim office in Baku was to coordinate its activities with those of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs in the humanitarian assistance programme. The international community could not remain indifferent to the presence of 1 million refugees and displaced persons in a republic with a population of barely more than 7 million. The total volume of aid provided by United Nations bodies exceeded US$ 15 billion.

50. Lastly, the interim office had made a very useful contribution to the distribution of the aid which Azerbaijan was receiving. It was also participating in the establishment of development programmes, particularly in the environmental field.

51. For all those reasons Azerbaijan very much hoped that the interim office would continue its activities.

52. Mrs. EGESBORG-HANSEN (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, which had consistently worked for better coordination of the activities of the United Nations system, said that they welcomed the concept of the integrated approach that had guided the establishment of the interim offices in seven countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States. They also welcomed the views expressed by the Secretary-General in his report on that question (A/48/146/Add.1).

53. The Nordic countries noted that the strengthened role of the resident coordinators had been a positive step which should promote the concept of the integrated approach and the idea of a unified United Nations presence at the country level.

54. They also noted with satisfaction the statement by the Secretary-General that he intended to negotiate the legal status and the relationship of those offices with the receiving States; that would secure their full cooperation in the future.

55. While they fully appreciated the obvious benefits to be derived from a more unified United Nations presence, the Nordic countries believed that efforts in that area should continue to be in line with what had already been mandated by the General Assembly, particularly in its resolutions 46/182 and 47/199. Before the General Assembly decided on new modalities in that area, more information and experience were required.

56. In his report, the Secretary-General envisaged the expansion of the responsibilities of the United Nations representative. In the opinion of the Nordic countries, more experience needed to be gained first within the present concept of the interim offices. It would be premature to entrust the resident coordinator with broader responsibilities at the present stage.

57. As for financing, the Nordic countries felt that efforts should be directed towards a clear and fair apportionment of costs between the United Nations regular budget and the budget of the operational organizations of the United Nations system, including the specialized agencies.

58. Mr. YEGOROV (Belarus) recalled that, in February 1992, the Governing Council of UNDP had included Belarus among those countries which were to receive technical assistance for development and that, for a year and a half, Belarus had been an active partner in development cooperation within the United Nations. That had been largely facilitated by the decision to open a United Nations interim office in Minsk, which had played a major role in the interaction between the Government of Belarus and many United Nations bodies. The Government and people of Belarus had welcomed the initiative taken by the Secretary-General in that regard and they had established the necessary conditions for the smooth functioning of the interim office. From the outset, the office had attempted to coordinate its activities with those of Belarus in matters related to development, humanitarian assistance and the dissemination of information about the United Nations. He welcomed the action taken by the Secretary-General to ensure that operational activities for development were based on an integrated, unified, cost-effective and innovative approach to development cooperation, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 47/199.

(Mr. Yegorov, Belarus)

59. The interim office at Minsk had been established on the basis of a cooperative agreement of the standard type between the Governments of recipient countries and United Nations bodies. That had led to the formulation of a short-term country programme and the drafting of outlines of projects dealing with economic and socials matters during the transitional period. The very presence of the interim office and its activities were, in fact, helping the Government of Belarus to undertake large-scale socio-economic reforms and to overcome the consequences of the Chernobyl catastrophe. The office had also made a useful contribution to the integration of Belarus into the world economy. His delegation shared the view expressed by the Secretary-General in paragraphs 10 to 14 of his report (A/48/146/Add.1) on the activities of the office.

60. He welcomed the integrated, unified, cost-effective and innovative approach to development cooperation advocated by the General Assembly in its resolutions 47/199 and 46/182; as the Secretary-General had noted, all aspects of the question should be reviewed periodically, in the light of the Charter of the United Nations.

61. Belarus felt that the conditions now existed for an integrated United Nations presence in the country. It was important that the seven existing interim offices, together with those which were being established at Asmara and in Moscow, should be confirmed in existence by the General Assembly, and that the proposals for their financing set out in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 should be adopted. Lastly, the General Assembly should clearly define the mandate of those offices. His delegation had already begun work on that question.

62. Mr. SUZIEDELIS (Lithuania), speaking on behalf of the three Baltic States, which were following the debate with interest, said that those States continued to benefit considerably from the presence of UNDP resident coordinators in their capitals. The fears expressed with respect to the interim offices had proved to be unfounded.

63. In his report to the General Assembly (A/48/146/Add.1), the Secretary-General pointed to the need to present to the international community an image of the United Nations as an integrated system whose component parts were able to work together. The Baltic States wholeheartedly supported the Secretary-General's efforts to that end.

64. The problems involved in the transition of countries from centrally planned to market economies called for an appropriate response from the international community, consisting of a comprehensive approach to development activities and United Nations engagement. An integrated United Nations presence allowed for more accurate assessment of a country's needs, coordinated planning and means of evaluating programme impact. The integration of field offices was therefore a reasonable and cost-effective step that made it possible to rationalize assistance and reduce duplication of effort.

65. Experience had shown that the fears of an intrusive, supranational State expressed by some delegations were unfounded. The Baltic countries had found that all activities were currently and would continue to be coordinated and initiated only with the consent of the Governments concerned.

(Mr. Suziedelis, Lithuania)

66. The UNDP resident coordinators posted in the Baltic countries had, with the support of the Governments of those countries, assisted the United Nations in many areas: economic development, technical assistance and dissemination of information. Those offices had also helped to coordinate and facilitate visits by high-ranking United Nations officials (concerning the complete withdrawal of foreign military forces, for example) and visiting missions of various United Nations agencies. To be sure, their impact might have been even greater with better cooperation, coordination and integration within the United Nations system, and much work still needed to be done in that area. For that reason, the Baltic countries firmly supported the Secretary-General's proposals concerning the change of title of the interim offices to "integrated offices" and the provision of all necessary resources to ensure the successful operation of the network of integrated United Nations offices.

67. Mr. BLANEY (United States of America) welcomed the Secretary-General's report on the United Nations interim offices. The report addressed important issues, to which Member States, the Secretariat and the funds, programmes and agencies that made up the United Nations system should continue to give thought.

68. The United States, along with many other Member States, had long been a proponent of improved coordination of United Nations field activities and had even advocated that United Nations departments, funds, programmes and agencies operating at the field level should share premises. The new situation in the world offered an unprecedented opportunity to establish a coherent and rational United Nations field office structure that would respond to specific and legitimate needs of countries while respecting the hopes of people throughout the world and delivering effective economic, social and technical assistance.

69. Resolution 47/199 provided valuable tools for greater coordination, one of its key components being the strengthening of the resident coordinator. The United Nations interim office should not be seen as a permanent solution replacing the resident coordinator principle endorsed by Member States in resolution 47/199. Rather, it should be a positive and complementary contribution to the effort to coordinate and streamline all United Nations activity in the field. Before endorsing the establishment of interim offices, however, further analysis of the United Nations interim office concept and of the experience acquired was needed. Issues for further examination were the degree to which the interim offices could have responsibilities beyond traditional United Nations humanitarian and development assistance goals and objectives; the relationship between the United Nations representative, the UNDP resident representative in his or her traditional resident coordinator role and the directors representing the other United Nations funds, programmes and agencies at the field level and the budgetary implications, in both the short and long term, and financing sources.

70. While those issues were not new, Member States, the Secretariat and the funds and programmes now had the will to act together. Resolution 47/199 was a result of that new collective spirit. The Secretary-General should therefore be encouraged to study the United Nations interim office model further and ensure that it complied with the important coordination principles laid out in resolution 47/199. The experience gained in implementing resolution 47/199 would lay a solid foundation for the triennial review process, and the guiding

(Mr. Blaney, United States)

principles to emerge would lead to a United Nations field system that would meet the needs and challenges of the future.

71. Mr. ABELIAN (Armenia) expressed appreciation for the report of the Secretary-General (A/48/146/Add.1) on the United Nations interim offices.

72. The emergence of the new independent States in Central and Eastern Europe had ushered in an unprecedented period of change, difficulties and conflicts. It was no longer sufficient to maintain the "acceptable" standards of the past; matters of development increasingly had to be taken up from a global perspective. The efficacy of the United Nations system would depend on how well its programmes and activities responded to that evolving concept of development.

73. United Nations representation in the developing countries should not disturb or replace existing coordination mechanisms. The basic premise for United Nations efforts should be that each country was at a particular juncture in its development and that the United Nations must adapt its involvement to the resources at the country's disposal. It was encouraging to note that the Secretary-General attached importance to the individuality of each country within universal development processes.

74. Armenia was in the process of establishing its own political, economic and administrative structures, which required it to develop its institutional and human capacities. A continuous United Nations presence in Armenia would therefore be essential, and the main role of the United Nations interim office in Armenia would be to strengthen the new comprehensive approach advocated by the Secretary-General.

75. The United Nations interim office in Armenia and the Government of Armenia had joined forces to facilitate the political, economic and social transition in the country. In order for those efforts to be successful, the United Nations should focus on three aims: peace, development and democracy.

76. Armenia should be assisted in building capacity in the social and economic spheres, pending the beginning of the peace process. It should also be helped to transfer smoothly to a more stable macroeconomic environment, taking its specific features into account, for there was no single transition model to be prescribed for all countries.

77. Since its inception, the United Nations interim office in Armenia had been cooperating with the Government in reinforcing stability mechanisms and coordinating and facilitating humanitarian aid efforts. The goal of the United Nations would increasingly become the promotion of development.

78. Armenia fully supported the proposal in the Secretary-General's report to change the title of the new field offices to "integrated offices".

79. Mrs. ARYSTANBEKOVA (Kazakhstan) said that her country, as one of the seven States in which United Nations interim offices had been established, attached great importance to cooperation with the United Nations system, which would enable Kazakhstan to carry out smoothly its fundamental socio-economic reforms and to integrate itself into the world economy. That was why Kazakhstan had

(Mrs. Arystanbekova, Kazakhstan)

signed an agreement with the United Nations and recently had even provided a building for the United Nations interim office. Moreover, consultative meetings of donor countries regarding Kazakhstan had been organized by UNDP and the World Bank, and, at the request of the Government of Kazakhstan, the United Nations system was developing programmes for the country in the fields of public administration and management, private sector development, economic reform, human development and the social sector, and humanitarian assistance. In addition, the United Nations interim office had been helpful in coordinating emergency relief assistance from the international community following the severe floods which had struck the country recently.

80. Kazakhstan also welcomed the regional programmes of the United Nations system and accorded high priority to developing and implementing programmes with a view to eliminating the consequences of the disaster at the Semipalatinsk nuclear-testing ground. Kazakhstan also appreciated the training opportunities which the United Nations system was providing through a network of international workshops and seminars.

81. Those results did not mean that the mechanisms for cooperation between the United Nations and Kazakhstan had been thoroughly perfected. They were, rather, simply first steps requiring further development and improvement. Kazakhstan was in favour of a unified United Nations presence which would focus on development, socio-economic problems, the environment and humanitarian assistance, and provide advisory and information services in close coordination and cooperation with the Government of Kazakhstan.

82. Kazakhstan supported the proposal of the Secretary-General to substitute the word "integrated" for the word "interim" in the phrase "interim offices" and she hoped that, in view of the importance of that question for the newly independent States, the Committee, in its debate on that question, would reach a clear and unambiguous decision.

83. Mr. LWIN (Myanmar) believed that the statement by the Under-Secretary-General had clarified the points of concern to a number of delegations. As the Chairman of the Group of 77 had noted, more time was needed for consultations on the item and Myanmar reserved the right to speak on it at a later stage.

84. Mr. KELLOWAY (Australia) observed that one of the fundamental questions facing the United Nations concerned the reform of the Organization in order to enable it to play a more effective role and, when viewed in that context, the concept of interim offices deserved the full support of Member States.

85. The circumstances which in early 1992 had necessitated a United Nations presence in the Baltic States and in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States justified the Secretary-General's decision to exercise his prerogative and set up interim offices. Australia endorsed the Secretary-General's intention to change the name of those offices to "United Nations integrated offices".

86. In a broader context, Australia believed that United Nations representation could be organized in a more effective manner and supported the measures

(Mr. Kelloway, Australia)

proposed by the Secretary-General to improve coordination and integration of United Nations activities at the country level.

87. It was to be hoped that, while development and humanitarian affairs would represent a large part of the offices' work, other activities could also be undertaken, including activities relating to public information or, with the consent of the Government concerned, preventive diplomacy or peacemaking functions mandated by the General Assembly or the Security Council.

88. Of course, it was always possible to view the new arrangement as impinging on the sovereignty of Member States; however, the establishment of those offices would require the specific agreement of the host Government, which was essential to maintaining the basic principles upon which the relationship between the United Nations and its Member States was built.

89. While supporting the initiatives proposed as part of the ongoing process of reforming the United Nations, Australia continued to have several questions regarding the cost-sharing arrangements between the United Nations and UNDP, the administration by UNDP of the future integrated offices, the management guidelines and criteria set out in resolution 47/199, and the eventual expansion of the integrated offices and means for preventing duplication of effort.

90. Mr. HORIGUCHI (Japan) said he welcomed the information provided by the Under-Secretary-General. His Government attached great importance to the integration of development activities, which would make those activities more productive. In addition, it was crucial to implement General Assembly resolution 47/199.

91. Moreover, it was necessary to determine how United Nations representatives would be recruited. The selection process needed to be made more transparent.

92. For those reasons, the question required close study in all its aspects.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

93. The CHAIRMAN recalled that, at its 50th plenary meeting, the General Assembly had decided to include in its agenda an item entitled "Emergency assistance for the economic rehabilitation of Rwanda" and to allocate it to the Second Committee. That item could be considered at the same time as the other items relating to assistance, namely agenda items 41, 98, 100, 101, 102, 103, 105 and 169, which the Second Committee would consider on 16 November. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to approve that proposal.

94. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.